



February 23, 2023

Testimony

Re: HB06692

I am JoAnne Torti, founder and Executive Director of ASAP!, an arts-infused education organization providing in-school, after-school, and summer programs for children and families throughout northwest CT and beyond.

A special thank you to the committee for raising the bill and recognizing the importance of arts, culture, and tourism to the state's economy and workforce.

The bill supports a proposal presented by Connecticut Arts Alliance, Connecticut Humanities, and Connecticut Tourism Coalition to provide meaningful, reliable, and equitable investment in these critical contributors to the state's economy and workforce.

As an organization providing space for arts learning and building culture, we see the benefits. Students are engaged, creative members of the community.

Our focus is to foster relationships and cooperative practices that build community. We bring together students and teachers with varied life experiences and roles to listen, learn, collaborate, and create. By emphasizing varied perspectives, we are nurturing curiosity, communication, and awareness with the idea that these are foundational to a nurturing, generative, and innovative society.

Funding from the state helps ASAP! realize transformational change, including increasing staff, employing more artists, providing opportunities for college interns, building relationships with new schools that need our programs more than ever, and strategizing long-term financial planning that diversifies our funding channels and provides us the ability to offer more tuition-free programs.

I look forward to working with the committee as the session progresses and thank them for their much-needed and diligent work.

Important facts from the committee about Arts, Culture, and Tourism Sector:

- Comprised of more than 1,000 organizations.
- Represents \$40 billion (13.4%) of the state domestic product
- Directly and indirectly employs a workforce of 175,000
- When adequately funded, state investments return \$3 in revenues for each \$1 invested and returns begin to be realized in the same fiscal year.

P.O BOX 15
WASHINGTON DEPOT, CT
06794

860.868.0740
asapct.org
asap@asapct.org

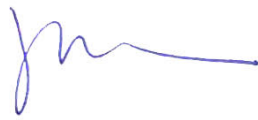
BOARD OF DIRECTORS
TAL FAGIN *President*
JACK ROSENBERG *Treasurer*
AMY JULIA BECKER *Secretary*
ANDREW LINDE
AMOL NAIK
DANIEL PINE
BEATRICE ROSSI-LANDI
SHANLEY ROWE
SARA SAVAGE
NICOLE TONGUE
TONY VENGROVE
MICHELLE WEAVER
KATHY WENNING

Facts about historical (pre-pandemic) underfunding:

- For every \$1 Connecticut invested per capita in arts and culture in 2020, Massachusetts and New York invested \$1.60 and Rhode Island invested \$2.
- At \$1.11 per capita, pre-pandemic state funding for tourism ranks lowest among our neighbors—Rhode Island (\$5.05), New York (\$3.07), and Massachusetts (\$1.65)—making it difficult to compete for tourists in those markets.

Thank you for your time and kind consideration of HB06692.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'JoAnne Torti', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

JoAnne Torti